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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.  **INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY USSR (Moscow Oblast)

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SUBJECT Airfield of Nikolo-Khovanskoye

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1. A dirt road leading to the airfield branched off from the Nikolo-Khovanskoye (37°27'E/55°36'N) - Komunarka state farms - Moscow asphalt highway (Moscow Oblast). Except for one side which bordered on a woods, the airfield was surrounded by the fields of the collective farm. A narrow clearing had been cut into the woods. The airfield, which seemed to be a newly constructed installation, had a rail-road connection.
2. The landing field and the narrow clearing were covered with steel plates, about 300x60 centimeters and 55mm thick. (for details see Annex 1). The perforations of the plates were punched in such a way that they could be handled on both sides. Such a plate was once used by the PWs for a tractor which was stuck in the mud.
3. Installations on the border of the airfield:
  - a. Two log houses, 10 meters square and covered with tiles.
  - b. Two earth bunkers occupied by air force personnel.
4. The airfield was occupied by:
  - a. Thirty to forty jet aircraft (see Annex 2),
  - b. Twenty Ju-52s (type designation learned from former German Air Force soldiers).
5. Description of the jet planes:

a circular opening, 40 cm in diameter, in nose slightly below center; above this opening were two small black points which looked like openings. Engine roar heard. Low-wing monoplane, wings in slight dihedral. Strikingly slim and high rudder assembly above the rear end of the fuselage.

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Main landing gear set slightly behind leading edge of wing and retracting rearward. Fuselage projecting a little beyond the rudder assembly ending rather abruptly. A small attachment below the rear end of the fuselage looked like the end of a barrel. Cockpit strikingly flat, hardly noticeable from the front. Either one or two-man crew.

The plane was painted a dark red and marked with a white star on the fuselage. Its speed was faster than that of all the other known aircraft types. Very short take-off run not exceeding 100 meters. Starting procedure: The plane began to taxi slowly; after having taxied a short stretch a noise like that of the detonation of a light bomb was heard. Almost immediately the plane cleared the ground as if catapulted. No smoke or jet of fire was observed. The landing speed of the plane was very high and the rolling stretch required by the plane after touching ground was very long. One often had the impression that the landing field was too short for the landing planes. The plane was capable of steep climbs, large radii of turn, short flights of no more than 30 minutes duration.

6. There was much flying at the airfield until 9 p.m.
  - a. Continuous individual take-offs and landings with jet planes.
  - b. Once or twice every week 10 Ju-52s took off. While flying in formation over the airfield or unploughed fields of the collective farm, 60 to 70 parachutists jumped from them. From the same formation bundles of five perforated steel plates as used for the covering of landing fields were also dropped. The plates were lowered to the ground by a blue-grey parachute-like device about 2 meters in diameter and 4 meters long. Six such bundles were dropped from one plane. The plates were laid out by the parachutists and the aircraft landed on the site covered by these plates.
7. The airfield ground personnel were quartered in earth bunkers at the field, while the flying personnel, mostly officers, were daily taken to the airfield in cars.

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Comment:

- a. The report is a valuable supplement to the partly contradictory occupation of this airfield which is assumed to be used for the ~~reequipping~~ of air units or to be occupied by a fighter pilot school for the retraining with jet aircraft.
- b. The covering of the runways with steel plates and the presence of jet aircraft may be considered confirmed. The described jet fighter type seems to have a similar configuration to the swept-back type seen in Corki (see the report on the Corki Aircraft Plant No. 21). The description of the take-off procedure leads to the conclusion that Jatos were used for these take-offs. The previous assumption that the observed aircraft were pure rocket-propelled planes is not supported by this report.

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- c. Important is the observation of the flying with Ju-52s (para 6). It is believed that these activities were connected with the training of an airborne runway construction company. The practical value of this training must not be overrated since the employment of about 1,000 aircraft, each carrying a payload of about 3 tons (equal to about 12 bundles of steel plates as described), would be required for the construction of a 500x30-meter runway. The railroad connection of the airfield was reported for the first time.

2 Annexes: 2 sketches on ditto:

1. Steel Plates as Used for the Construction of Runways at the Nikolo-Khovanskoye Airfield.
2. Jet Fighter Observed at the Nikolo-Khovanskoye Airfield.

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